

Today's News - Friday, October 16, 2009

- NovoHouse: a new housing system that needs no training (or electricity) to put together could be a new solution to rebuilding after natural disasters (with open source blueprints to boot).
- Duany heads to Scotland in a new initiative to create sustainable communities.
- New media technologies are "dramatically changing the way the public understands and participates in government" (the future may be bright, "but it's going to be harder than we think," says Sadik-Khan).
- U.K.'s Foreign Office is told to "scale back" grand plans for grand embassies.
- Baillieu bemoans the move: "it would be a shame if the only government department with a track record for patronage...is to go the way of every other department and lose its nerve."
- Things are looking up for Orlando's new Barton Myers-designed performing arts center (just not as up as some would like to see).
- Team Germany snags Solar Decathlon win (again) for energy production; runners-up take kudos for affordability and architecture(!).
- Weekend diversions:
 - In Portland, OR, "China Design Now" is a "thrilling exploration" of the "ceaseless drama, beauty and turmoil that is China at a crossroads. That's no gentle task."
 - "Lincoln Center: Celebrating 50 Years" celebrates the "audacity" of the very idea of an arts center.
 - "How could they let that happen?" NYC's Center for Architecture's "Context/Contrast: New Architecture in Historic Districts" helps explain.
 - In Massachusetts, "High and Low: Projects from Eisenman Architects" carries multiple messages.
 - In Dallas, "The Art of Architecture: Foster + Partners" can "seem introspective and unassuming to a fault. But look closer."
 - Atlanta's High Museum gives over three floors to John Portman, "detailing the career of the architect who, in a large measure, built this city."
 - A FEMA trailer transformed into the Emergency Response Studio takes up parking space at Wesleyan University in Middletown, CT.
 - In Los Angeles, "The Wall Project" commemorates the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall (and what a multi-faceted celebration it is!).
 - Page turners: "American Power" is a photographer's "nomadic exploration of the nation's production of energy and its hunger for it" (great slide show).
 - Morgan's "Yankee Modern" has "just enough poetic passages to support the hard-working design prose that points out Estes/Twombly's "quiet environmentalism."
 - "Depending on Time" by Jennie Savage aims at encourage people to see a side of Cardiff often ignored: "somewhere between 'public spaces, town planning, constructed landscapes and the human story'."

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First aid kit: rebuilding after natural disasters: As eastern Asia counts the cost of yet another natural disaster...a British-designed housing system that needs no training to put together and could prove invaluable to the rebuilding process...Living Steel...is making the blueprint "open source" -- Cartwright Pickard [image, links]- Building (UK)

Andres Duany signs up to drive for sustainable communities: ...will be working on plans for low-carbon Scottish communities...will run charrettes in Dumfries, Aberdeen and Fife. The projects are part of...Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Developing the Open City: New communication and interaction technologies are dramatically changing the way the public understands and participates in government...broadening the urban policy conversation, but challenges and questions lie ahead...the subject of "Open Cities: New Media's Role in Shaping Urban Policy"...- PLANetizen

Foreign Office U-turn over embassy costs: Tony Fretton's Warsaw Embassy could be the last 'grand projet' as department told to scale back...around £5 million has already been slashed from the £27 million budget for HOK's embassy [in] Jakarta, forcing the architect to redesign the building "from scratch"- BD/Building Design (UK)

Op-Ed: End of an era for embassies: Today's opening of Tony Fretton's Warsaw embassy could mark the final days of the Foreign Office as an enlightened client...it would be a shame if the only government department with a track record for patronage...is to go the way of every other department and lose its nerve. By Amanda Baillieu- BD/Building Design (UK)

Take a peek inside our new arts center: The center will be built in stages, with the symphony-opera-dance theater put off until more money can be raised. -- Barton Myers [slide show]- Orlando Sentinel (Florida)

Team Germany wins repeat in Solar Decathlon: ...took over first place...on Friday, beating out teams from Illinois and California on the final day...beat out its rivals by getting the highest score in...the amount of excess electricity the home produced. [images, links]- CNET

'China Design Now' at the Portland Art Museum: ...this journey through contemporary Chinese design, architecture and fashion is a calculating but thrilling exploration of a country that aspires beyond the clouds...capturing the ceaseless drama, beauty and turmoil that is China at a crossroads. That's no gentle task. -- Ziba Design [link to video]- The Oregonian

How the Arts Were Turned Into Neighbors: "Lincoln Center: Celebrating 50 Years" celebrates the audacity of Lincoln Center's founding...expected to combat what was then known as "urban blight"...The idea of an arts center, though, was also exceedingly peculiar for its time...needed to "persuade the public of its viability" ... -- Philip Johnson; Eero Saarinen; Max Abramovitz; Pietro Belluschi [slide show]- New York Times

Glass/Brick: Why the historic city needs the new: "How could they let that happen?" The indignant thought asserts itself whenever a flashy architectural stranger swaggers into a polite, low-lying part of town. The exhibit "Context/Contrast: New Architecture in Historic Districts" at the Center for Architecture, helps explain. By Justin Davidson- New York Magazine

At its most basic, a building provides shelter from the elements. But...can also be a creative expression, vaulting its purpose from a mere utilitarian living space into a statement about history, culture, and the human experience. That's one of the messages behind "High and Low: Projects from Eisenman Architects" at the Robert Lehman Art Center in North Andover. - Eagle Tribune (Massachusetts)

"The Art of Architecture: Foster + Partners": Take a peek behind Winspear architect's model projects at the Nasher: In an age of architectural one-liners and gimmicks, buildings from the Pritzker Prize-winning Briton's practice can seem introspective and unassuming to a fault. But look closer... - Dallas Morning News

"John Portman: Art and Architecture" at the High Museum...detailing the career of the architect who, in a large measure, built this city..."There are three floors over there that talk for me, in silence. I hope you enjoy it." [links to images]- Atlanta Journal-Constitution

FEMA Special: Paul Villinski sustainably remakes a salvaged Katrina trailer...an appealing prototype of a live-work space that he calls Emergency Response Studio...currently parked in front of the Zilkha Gallery at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut... By William Menking [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

History Comes Alive in Los Angeles with the Wende Museum and Archive of the Cold War "The Wall Project" Commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall, beginning October 17- Wende Museum and Archive of the Cold War

Book review: Capturing a Nation's Thirst for Energy: The photographer Mitch Epstein routinely came under suspicion while taking pictures of dams and power plants for his new book, "American Power"....a nomadic exploration of the nation's production of energy and its hunger for it... [slide show]- New York Times

Book review: "Yankee Modern: The Houses of Estes/Twombly" by William Morgan...just enough poetic passages to support the hard-working design prose...points out their quiet environmentalism... - Residential Architect

A world behind the shop fronts: "Depending on Time" by Jennie Savage...is aimed at encouraging people to see a side of Cardiff often ignored...somewhere between "public spaces, town planning, constructed landscapes and the human story"... - South Wales Echo

Market Research Strategies in Uncertain Times #4: Client Research - The Secret to Turning Prospects into Clients: If you carry on a dialog from an informed position, you will project confidence and immediately earn a position of trust. By Frances Gretes - ArchNewsNow

Eclectic Tech: Facebook Headquarters in Palo Alto, California: Employees were hands-on in designing the new HQ for the social media giant - and not everything is "Facebook blue." -- Studio O+A [images]- ArchNewsNow



-- Morphosis / Gruzen Samton: 41 Cooper Square, Cooper Union, New York, NY

-- EASTERN design office: Slit Court, Sumizome, Fushimi, Kyoto, Japan

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